562 clothing and dressed her in valuable furs, especially in part of the
556 pelt of a striped antelope called mpangá. In some villages she was permitted to wear leopardskin in front as well as in back.

Then the father would decree (-bɛ́kya) that since his daughter
[582] had become bolúmbú she would always wear furs and would stop working, and that she would be given in marriage only to a very rich and influential man, not to the first comer. Therefore, a synonym for bolúmbú is bɔ̌na ɔ́â boɛ́ko, "child of the decree, a child set apart, forbidden."

This ceremony may be held regardless of the child's age, at any time between three years and adolescence.

When the ceremony is ended the girl withdraws (-ulama, transitive -uja) into a hut specially prepared for this occasion, which is called ileke. Her seclusion lasts only a few months. When certain natural needs oblige her to leave the house, she goes out the back way through the banana grove and hides as much of herself as possible under a mat. She does not walk on the bare ground; her feet must not
[285] touch the earth. That is why mats are spread everywhere she steps. She does no work; her food is prepared by her mother, sister, aunt, etc., or by a slave. When it comes to her toilette, she washes her hands not in water, but in palm oil. [32] All these practices are marks of respect and honor.

When the period of seclusion is ended, the girl's father gives a second feast, with dances, drinks, etc., and the bolúmbú comes out walking on mats. But there is no further ceremony. From then on the girl is no different from other girls. But she retains the sign of her distinction, the wearing of furs, and she does no housework.

[582] The marriage of a bolúmbú always occurred very late, since a
[558] man who wanted to take her for his wife had to collect a good deal of wealth before he could take the risk of asking for her hand. Should his attempt prove fruitless, he was exposed to ridicule in the whole region.

184 Among the tribes living on the left bank of the Luilaka any
556 man who was rich and of good family could ask for the hand of a
562 bolúmbú in marriage. Among the Injɔ́lɔ́, on the other hand, the re-
582 quirements were more complicated. The suitor had to belong to another tribe or group. For instance, a girl who belonged to the

194 Engónjó group would be given only to a man from the Wesé, the
556 Ngombe, or a neighboring tribe, but never to an Engónjó. All the
562 Engónjó considered the bolúmbú their sister. Thus when the future hus-
582 band went to the family of the bolúmbú to ask for her hand, every village barred his way by means of a fence. All the bride price valuables which he carried with him were taken from him, and an equivalent amount in various kinds of goods, such as hens, ducks, dogs, mats, etc., was substituted for it. That is, he exchanged bride price valuables for nkomi valuables [dowry]. (1) The suitor could pass only when the

1. See Chapter II, Article VII.

village that barred his way had nothing left with which to continue the exchange. If he found his riches exhausted, he had to go back home to replenish the supply. Everything he gave in this [33] fashion was counted as bride price, jɛ̌ngí (1) and everything he re-

1. See Chapter II, Article VIII.

ceived was part of the nkomi [dowry]. (2)

2. See Chapter II, Article VII.

556 It is understandable that under these conditions asking to
562 marry a bolúmbú was a luxury that the common man could not afford.
582 The suitor had to belong to a rich and influential family all of whose members would assist him.

When the suitor finally succeeded in clearing a passage to the father of the chosen one with sufficient treasures, the latter put no further obstacles in his way. As for the girl, she felt exceedingly honored and delighted that a man loved her so much that he would go to so much trouble and spend such a vast amount out of affection for her.

As for the rest of the proceedings, the bride price payment was made in the same way as for any other marriage. But when the

556 562 572 bride-to-be was introduced to her bridegroom, she walked toward him across a row of mats. A feast was organized to celebrate this important and joyous event. Dances accompanied with a flow of beer went on for weeks, sometimes for a whole month.

[431] The father gave his son-in-law a great many nkomf (3) objects

3. See Chapter II, Article VII.

so that the bolúmbú often became yéngaende or at least lifayǎnjoku. (4)

4. See Chapter VII, Article IV.

He did not allow his daughter to leave without giving her at least one ebísa to wait on her. (5) Thus when Bolángé w'Ioma of Lokóndola

5. See Chapter VII, Article III.

(Injólo, Ngombe) married Bonjéngó, daughter of Ilónjó y'Ókákema of Bompóma (Injólo, Engónjó) (who died in 1934), the bride received from her father four bibísa to do the work, as well as a young cousin who was to stay with her [34] to bring her firewood. In this way the father made sure that his beloved daughter would retain her honorable position as a great lady.

556 562 The husband, who wanted his wife to retain her superior status, now makes her his bolúmbú as well. (1) The term was: Bón ǒw'olúmbú

1. See Chapter VII, Article III. That is, unless she is his first wife. See ibid. and Article I.

átswá ô wǎlf ǒw'olúmbú ék'ǒme. He would say to those assembled: "Her father proclaimed her bolúmbú, and I proclaim her bolúmbú as well (Is'ékáé ôékvákf, emí mpé njôékya â ng'ôkó)."

What was the reason for the existence of this custom?

856 864 During a girl's early childhood beginning when she is still nursing, a mother with foresight will work to make her organs as perfect as possible. By applying pressure repeatedly and for long periods, she molds, so to speak, the outside in order to make it narrow, as this quality is greatly valued by our people.

It is the mother, too, who trains the girl in her preparations for married life. She teaches her how to behave toward her future husband, and at the same time instructs her in the duties of a good housewife (see Chapter X, Article VIII).

836 864 Certain forms of behavior, although their relationship to our subject is only superficial and external, must nevertheless be mentioned. An adult man will often take in his arms a little girl who has not yet been weaned, or perhaps only slightly more developed. He considers this child to be his wife. He has paid no bride price for her. But since she is a sister, cousin, or other relative of one of his wives, she is a "wife" from his point of view; that is, not only will it be possible for him to marry her later on, but even without becoming her husband he will enjoy a certain liberty in relation to her. (1) Thus, when such a man takes his young "wife" in his arms,

1. See Chapter VI, Article V, 2.

he is enjoying an anticipation of the future and speaks to her [66] in that sense, often accompanying his words with intimate caresses.

The same practice, mutatis mutandis, may be observed on the part of a woman toward a small boy whom she can consider as her "husband."

304 582 2. Circumcision

Circumcision is generally practiced. It is usually performed at an early age. Without going into the details at this point (1) or

1. They will be found in Chapter X, Article VII.

304 582 wishing to commit myself on the reason for this custom, it is a fact that a Nkundó woman will refuse to marry a man who has not been circumcised. Consequently, all the natives want to undergo this operation. That is the reply given by the natives when we asked about the reason for circumcision. When we pushed the inquiry further, they added that the women abhor the deposits that form under the foreskin. I mention this explanation for what it's worth. Nevertheless, this may really be the reason that impels them.

In any case circumcision would seem to have no religious or initiatory significance.

304 932 3. Tattooing

Two kinds of tattoos exist among the Nkundó: purely ornamental tattoos and sexual tattoos. (2) The latter are to be found only on women. The [67] designs are located on portions of the body surrounding the sex organs and even on the outside of the latter.

[619]

2. I will not discuss tribal tattoos because these do not seem to exist among the Nkundó. The reasons for tattooing vary from people to people and from group to group. It is for this reason that they are a distinctive mark. But that does not mean that such is their purpose. The distinctions apparent among the tattoos of various tribes are not an objective but a consequence, as are, for example, the variations among national costumes in Europe. Moreover, the contacts of our people in peace or war have extended by and large only to neighboring clans or tribes, who use the same type of ornamentation as they did. And in these encounters dialect differences serve as a much better means of identification.

548 ornaments or objects for her toilette (hairpins, for example), and it is probable therefore that individual cases of this sort occurred. But it is altogether unlikely that the practice was widespread, as it does not fit in with the economic organization of this people, among whom wealth is more or less collectively owned and, moreover, (as will be shown in Chapter VI, Article II) a woman has no property rights. [72] Therefore we can assume that there were only a few occasional prostitutes.

On the other hand, there have never been any professional prostitutes; that is, Nkundó women have never made a job out of prostitution, and the same thing may be said of the other forms listed above.

The number of prostitutes was necessarily limited, however, by the fact that the great majority of women were always married young (Chapter IV, Article I), and that adultery was severely punished (Chapter VI, Article VII).

Nevertheless, there is something which superficially resembles prostitution; that is, there is a category of girls and women whom at first glance one would be tempted to call prostitutes. Therefore it would be useful to examine the situation somewhat more closely, for though in itself it is entirely different from prostitution, it could easily lend itself to it.

548 582 882 It sometimes happens that a girl, besides the bolímbó (a socio-political institution in no way related to the degeneration of female sexuality), is kept in the home of her parents beyond the customary age before she is given in marriage. Such a girl is called ɛ́fótswâ̂la, "the one who does not marry." She is not bolímbó. Externally or -- to use philosophical terminology -- materially, the two customs resemble each other; but formally they are entirely different. Creating a bolímbó involves authority and influence and is thus a public matter. Whether a girl becomes an ɛ́fótswâ̂la, on the other hand, is a private matter between father and daughter. While the creation of a bolímbó is accompanied by public feasts and a decree officially proclaimed (boɛ́ko) by the father and accepted by the council of family heads [73], the establishment of a ɛ́fótswâ̂la involves no official act or ceremony.

548 582 882 The name ɛfɔtswâɛla does not mean that the girl will stay single all her life. Her marriage is not permanently excluded; it is only postponed.

As for her behaviour, the ɛfɔtswâɛla conducts herself like any Nkundɔ girl. Nothing distinguishes her from her companions. If a good match is proposed to her, she marries like everyone else.

This custom -- if one can use the term -- therefore has no real connection with prostitution. All that can be said is that the girl who stays single longer and until adulthood, is exposed to more libertinism and a life of debauchery.

586x It also happens that parents who are angry because their daughter has dissolved a marriage to a man they consider a good son-in-law prevent her from remarrying in an effort to make her return to her legitimate husband. If the parents and their child each hold to their viewpoint without yielding, such a situation can go on for many months until the wife is -- practically speaking -- no longer under the authority of her husband. And since the opposition of her parents prevents her from being married by another man, she easily comes to give herself to all. It should be added that at present this case is chiefly hypothetical. Parents no longer have the authority [178] to thwart the desires of an adult daughter in this way; if she is stubborn they have to yield out of fear that she will run far away. And that would be to go from the frying pan into the fire. But in the past the kind of situation I have described was not unusual.

548 369 The most fertile places for the breeding and development of prostitution are to be sought in the centers. The following principal causes can be given:

1) Female vanity is overexcited by the sight [74] of all the dazzling riches which have been imported by white men and which are such a temptation to Negro women. It requires a considerable income to satisfy this desire to enhance one's native beauty. Ordinary laborers and artisans do not earn enough money to satisfy their wives or daughters in this respect. Mistresses of Europeans or of foreign black men, the wives of "clerks" and other representatives of Negro high society display a degree of luxury startling and striking to the rest.

836
864

prohibition under any circumstances. I have heard these same terms used also by the natives in the vicinity of Coquilhatville.

The body becomes flabby and without strength, and this weakness ends in a fatal paralysis (byongɛ̂ nyɨ̆nyuka or nkatɛ̂ɛ̂nɛ̂). In addition, the girls feared that their sexual organs, not yet fully formed, would be torn. They were also imbued with a very intense fear: bofolu w'aende, "the fear of males," bofolu w'ɨmato, "the fear of females." They also feared death -- bɛ̂lotɛ̂kɛ̂ iwɛ̂. The parents added that sexual acts were free from danger only between persons of the requisite age.

836
864
838
This does not mean that children did not commit indecent acts. The game of ioto, in which little girls try to cook (and which is always one of their favorite games (2) as it probably is throughout the

2. Some boys imitate this game in order to acquire the habit of preparing their own meals. Later they benefit from it on more than one occasion.

world), often gave rise to it. Small boys joined in the game in order to taste the meal. And quite naturally they began to play at "husband and wife," more or less. Often this game involved only innocent imitations, but other times touching and exhibitions occurred between children of the same sex or of opposite sexes. This game is far more dangerous nowadays, [81] because of a change in the attitude of young people toward sexual matters.

The game of yembankongo, in which boys, imitating monkeys, chase each other through the trees and creepers can -- and does - result in reprehensible scenes.

582
178
In former times most girls were married before puberty. But their husbands did not touch them until they had completed their normal development.

582
838
864
Among some individuals the fear of sexual relations was so deeply rooted that it persisted even beyond the age limit and was

conquered only by repeated assaults of passion. Thus it is generally known among the natives that young women used to seek refuge in their mother's house when the husband wanted to begin making use of his rights as a husband. The mother would try to persuade her daughter to submit to the law of life. But sometimes, if her child seemed too resistant, the mother made excuses for her and asked the husband to consider her daughter's youth. The man usually wanted to remain on good terms with his mother-in-law so he did not insist and resigned himself to waiting till nature influenced the spirit and heart of his wife.

Since young people were brought up in deep fear of dangerous relations, it should not surprise us that this feeling became a real habit and did not disappear spontaneously the moment a certain degree of liberty was permitted. As a matter of fact, could we not make similar observations in Europe?

This is the natural explanation for the praiseworthy degree of morality among adolescents in the past.

Nowadays all that has changed. The young people follow where their passions lead them. Not the slightest check is placed on their impulses. Parents pay only slight attention to the conduct of their children. [82] It is better not to inquire into the morality of modern youth. Husbands no longer respect the bodies of their adolescent brides, who are themselves quite used to a sexual life and eagerly look forward to it, and no longer know the feeling of "the fear of men." Should we then be astonished at the frightening decrease in the birth rate (1) and the ever increasing spread of venereal

1. The natives say that in the past young wives quickly became pregnant. And now ...

diseases, which seem to have been unknown in the past?

The reasons for this change will be investigated further on, under the letter *C*.

B. Between adults. Here the Nkundó are very lenient. There is a difference, however, between the socio-legal and moral viewpoints, although as we shall see the latter is influenced by the former.

A woman is entirely free, legally speaking, as long as the first payment on her bride price has not been made. No man has

581 consent; they do not distinguish between this conjugal pact which changes and the bride-price agreement which alone persists. And since for them the bride-price agreement is essential, while the conjugal pact is secondary, they pay attention only to the former. Thus we can legitimately interpret their statements on the nature of unions by inheritance and by replacement [230] as referring to the bride-price contract. Thus the fact that each relative of the deceased who wishes to marry the widow must make an individual payment (bekooli), while the clan contract continues unchanged demonstrates the effective reality of the distinction between the familial bride-price agreement and the individual conjugal pact.

To summarize all these considerations: we think that we are justified in giving the following definition: Nkundó marriage is a conjugal contract between a man and a woman which is firm in itself and is linked to a bride-price agreement of prescribed nature and formalities between their families.

Therefore we can conclude that the essential nature of Nkundó marriage conforms to the definition of that institution in general as given in ethics and that it fulfills all the necessary conditions. (1)

1. I am very grateful to Attorney General A. Sohier for having, in a very specific way, drawn my attention to the legal aspect of this question and having thus suggested that I make a thorough investigation of it.

[231] Chapter IV. The Age of the Bride and Groom

●582 The Nkundó may marry at any age. Their law contains no stipulation on the subject. Nevertheless, it was customary in the past for a girl to be married very young, while the boys could not take a wife until they had reached a really advanced age. Nowadays the time of marriage for the ever increasing number of girls and for the boys has been pushed forward almost universally. Let us examine the situation in detail, distinguishing between the sexes.

584 safeguard freedom, and the impression should not be given that childhood unions are encouraged -- as it sometimes is -- by the exemption of immature wives of polygamists from a supplementary tax.

There is no law requiring an elder sister to be married before a younger one, but such is the common practice. Exceptions are made only under certain circumstances, and particularly if the younger girl finds a suitor earlier than the older one, a reason which includes and sums up all the others (such as disadvantageous physical and psychological tendencies of the older sister).

178 584 This practice of marrying daughters off before maturity is beginning to change because of the increase in freedom which has been introduced by colonization. Nevertheless, as this change is not especially advantageous [236] its manifestations are still very slight. The Christian education of parents must of necessity delay the time of the daughter's marriage and will do so ipso facto as soon as Christian influence becomes sufficiently strong in the region.

Article II. Boys

● 582 Except in the rare instances of an engagement of two young children, it was formerly the common and normal practice for men to remain bachelors for many years after puberty. The old men tended first to their own wants, and the youths had to wait their turn, like their elders. This was considered entirely natural. Later on they could establish a home and "profit" from life. Meanwhile they found a little compensation with the wives of certain relatives or of others, if the opportunity arose.

582 564 To explain this state of affairs we can invoke the political organization of Nkundó society, which is based on age. It is therefore natural that those possessing authority should have its external [556] signs, and one of the foremost of these is the wealth manifested in the possession of wives. But, as we will point out later, the present situation greatly weakens this explanation.

582 583 It is more natural to consider the delay in the marriage of young men a logical consequence of the marriage of girls at an early age. Suppose that a boy is fifteen years old while his sister,

582 whose bride price will fall to him, is only three. At that age, she
583 is married. The children's father is in a hurry to use the capital he has received, small as it is, rather than to let it lie unproductive and run the risk of losing it one day for some reason or other. Therefore, he uses it to obtain a wife, often a child, for himself or his brother. Thus the boy is deprived of the means which would enable him to establish a home when he attains adulthood. He will have to wait till he can acquire new wealth, either through his own work, or thanks to the assistance of [237] various relatives, or through the death of his father or his uncles, or -- frequently -- from the bride price of a daughter to be born to his sister's nkita. In the last instance, *which formerly occurred very often*, he was obviously forced to wait many years. Thus in the example cited in Chapter II, Article X, had the events occurred a few decades earlier, Bakutu would have had to wait for the bride price of his cousin Wăngi, who was a good twenty-five years younger than he. If he had then been given the first part of the bride price, he would probably still have had to wait over ten years before becoming a husband in the full sense of the word, because the ikulă would have been used for an engagement with a very young child. More probably he would have been considered too young; the bride price would have been used for the benefit of another, and he would have had to wait another indeterminate number of years. Once the practice of marrying girls when they are small children is accepted, there is no other way out; everything is linked, and the result is inevitable, given the mentality of this society.

582 The elders' power to act in this way to their own advantage
428 stems from the collective nature of the people's inheritance system
583 (Chapter II, Article X and XI, 3, B). A bride price goes to the family; the right of the individual members is not personal or exclusive but is derived from their position in the hierarchy within the group.

Nevertheless, the fact that a man may claim priority to the bride price of his uterine sister over a brother born of a different mother seems to indicate that he originally held the chief rights to these valuables. The exercise of this right is postponed, and the concomitant transfers result.

582 583 We have spoken of the unproductivity of the bride price. This is a Nkundó notion, and it is accurate only because the old men want to satisfy themselves before their sons. Actually, they could very easily reconcile their desire that the bride price should be productive with the aspirations of the youths, at least in many instances. All they would need to do would be to use the valuables they have received for their sons' benefit by acquiring girls of the same age for them. The productivity of the valuables would not diminish [238] in the least, of course, since the goods would remain in the family. On the contrary, it would be increased because a greater number of progeny would probably be born. But our natives [842] knowledge of physiology does not seem to be sufficiently developed [181] for them to come to this conclusion. And even more probably their egoism has greatly clouded their intelligence and silenced the voice of good sense and fatherly love to make it possible for them to multiply the number of their wives and thus increase the easy satisfaction of their sensuality, augment their wealth, and reinforce their social position. It will be their sons' turn after their death.

561 428 595 582 This situation is aggravated by the fact that, except for the bosólo, the brothers, not the sons, of the deceased inherited the widows, who thus remained in the hands of the old men.

Because of their attitudes the old men monopolized most of the women. They established large harems for themselves, so that it was very difficult for the young men to find a woman to marry; they had to consider themselves lucky if their father provided them with a child.

582 178 Thus it was unheard of that a young man between twenty and thirty years old should marry, except for a few instances where a man acquired a child who was to become his wife after a number of years. Men were usually forty years old or older before they married.

Nowadays the situation has changed entirely; the attitude of the old men favors the young much more and has become almost normal. The great majority of fathers, if they have the means, procure a wife for their sons as soon as the latter are old enough to express a desire for one. This improvement is due to the fact that it has become

582 much easier to get married. A great number of young men who
178 would still be bachelors had they lived under the old regime now have wives. The young people leave home to go and work for the Whites, and the parents feel sorry for their sons and do not want to see them leave without a wife [239] to take care of them and prepare their food. This feeling has dealt the old custom a severe blow. And even for the young men who stay at home, it is no longer so difficult to obtain a wife. Paternal love has here triumphed over egoism.

Furthermore, the elders have been forced to take a more humanitarian attitude because, since the European occupation has given the young women a new freedom, they have abandoned their husbands and fled to the centers where, under the protection of the Whites, they have joined lovers who are as young as they. Therefore, it was much more intelligent to obtain a wife for their sons in an honest fashion rather than to expose themselves to loud palavers by the abandoned husband.

From all the preceding description it is clear that the man was considerably older than his wife. But because of the inheritance of widows it also happened -- and still happens -- that a man acquired wives who were older than he. When young men marry at the present time, many wives are definitely younger than their husbands; many adolescents have received prepubescent little girls for wives.

As a general rule a Nkundó woman does not like her husband to be much older than she, and she likes it even less if he is younger. Nowadays unions between persons of the same age increase continually. This increase is due more to the remarriage of divorcées, who prefer husbands of their own generation to the old men who first paid for them, than to first marriages between equals. The influence of Christian couples is called upon to play a great educational role in normalizing the situation of the girls.

The boys must marry in turn, according to age, because of
582 the seniority rule which regulates social relations. That is the rule, but it may be mitigated by the application of another rule, namely the one pertaining to the direct or indirect rights to a sister's bride

582 561 price. The rights of a polygamist's sons over their sisters' bride prices are not absolutely equal [240]. One of them can oppose the decision that one of his brothers, born of a different mother not related to his, should benefit from the bride price paid for his uterine sister. His right will incontestably prevail. But if he has other sisters, it is his duty out of brotherly love to help his less fortunate brother. If both of them have uterine sisters, there may be an exchange of bride-price rights which will hurt no one. Finally, if only the younger brother has a sister, his right to her bride price is precisely defined and personal, and it may therefore happen that he marries before his elder brother. But unless the mother is absolutely opposed to any such arrangement, an attempt is usually made to settle the matter in a friendly fashion by assigning the future bride price of a niece or cousin to the younger brother. The rules as we have explained them hold absolutely only for the present time. They also existed in the past, but the delay in the sons' marriages, as described above, resulted in a transferring of rights which could completely upset this order. Since, in practice, many men began their married lives after the death of their fathers or uncles, thus with inherited wives, the elder brothers benefited from the rules before the younger ones did. (1)

1. See also Chapter II, Article X.

593 578 Lastly, the eldest son may be deprived of his rights for certain reasons, such as a serious failure in his duties of respect and submission to his father. To punish him his father may curse him publicly, declare that he has lost his position as eldest son, and forbid him to acquire a wife. This practice is no longer common today; it would have little effect, for the young man would go and seek his fortune elsewhere. But history has left us some examples like that of Ikété ya Lonkinja, the first-born son of Ikété Elongama ea Longómbá, the ancestor of the Bombénga wá Bokenda family (Besombó).

Chapter V. Obstacles to Marriage

M
582 There is no specific term in Lonkundo for an "obstacle to marriage." General terms are used, as in our European languages.

Our people make no distinction between obstacles which nullify a marriage and those which are prohibitive in nature. Therefore, we will simply speak of obstacles without making any distinctions among them.

Article I. "Race"

M
P
582 The question of a diversity of races can be considered only with reference to the Batswá. Marriages with them are strictly for-
563 bidden. Nkundó rules of behavior are very strict with respect to relations between Baotó and Batswá. It is unheard of that opposite sexes of the two races should mingle, even for a simple conversation. There would then obviously be no question of marriage.

M
P
563 Among the Bilángi, a Batswá tribe of the Injólo of the Salonga-
588 Lulaka (who absolutely refuse to be called Batswá or Balúmbe), there have been two cases of such unions to my knowledge. Two Baotó women were involved, both, by a singular coincidence, from Lotángonda (Injólo, Engónjo). One was Njalí, daughter of Yole and sister of Lomúlu, the other Nsombola, sister of Limpema.

Njalí was taken in marriage by Bakao of Ikindatói. She wanted children desperately and, not having had any by her two successive Nkundó husbands, she ran away to the Bilángi in hopes of having better luck there. [242] She was not disappointed in her expectations. She gave birth to four sons: the eldest, Bonkono, who died some years ago; Bakao (Georges), who died in 1933; two sons, Bonkoní (Louis) and Joke (Henri), who are still alive. In 1933 the descent of the four numbered thirteen sons, six daughters, four grandsons, and one granddaughter. But there was never a legitimate marriage between Bakao and Njalí since no bride price was paid. And the descent have formed a small Bilángi clan, which is dependent on the grandmother's clan (Ilongó of Lotángonda).

P
178 doctor who was in charge of the dispensary at Flandria at that time
588 informed me of the case of a Bɔtswa fruit harvester in the service of
563 the H.C.B. who had syphilis of unquestionably sexual origin.
164

Though a racial difference constitutes an obstacle to marriage,
M
582 a tribal or ethnic one does not. Where the geographic situation permits, true Nkundɔ́, such as the Elíngá, marry members of neighboring groups such as the Ngombɛ, the Mbole, or the Ekonda.

Article II. Social Status

M
554 Among the Nkundɔ́ a difference in social status is not an
582 obstacle to marriage. They have no social classes strictly speaking.
[565] They differentiate between those with authority, those who are in-
[571] feriors, and the individuals or families who are not entitled to their word in political matters; but these ideas do not come into play in ordinary social relations, [245] and especially not with respect to marriage. A person may belong to a clan which is inferior, subject, dependent, foreign, or descended from a slave; nevertheless he may marry even a member of the group's senior clan. These distinctions are in the realm of politics; a marriage is a matter of law, affection, and good relations based on the payment of a bride price.

M
567 Actual slaves are an exception, but here a distinction must
582 be made between the sexes. Unions with slave women were very common, but they were not marriages strictly speaking. Before a real marriage was entered into, the woman was set free. More details on this subject will be given in Chapter VII, Article V. For men the situation is altogether different. The condition of a slave was not only inferior, it was dishonorable, though a bit less so than among the Ancients. It might be overlooked if the love between the pair was unusually ardent, and there are a few clans descended from a "free" woman and a slave man, who were united in a proper and legitimate marriage for which the master paid the bride price.

There is no longer any opposition to the union of a "free" person with the descendant of a mixed marriage. The children may always claim kinship with their maternal ancestors who in these

582
567 matters are more important than the father's ancestry. (1)

[554]

1. Among the Nkundó no shame is attached to not knowing the family of one's father. But not to be able to name the mother's clan is a great dishonor for it proves that she was a slave.

There is less opposition to the first generation born of a couple who were both slaves than for their parents, and it progressively decreases with each succeeding generation. There is practically no opposition now to the grandsons. The reason seems to be
[597] that although receiving a wife from one's master in a regular marriage does not constitute emancipation (nsikó, nsikola) for the slave, it is a kind of adoption (wěmya, -émya). [246]

Article III. Kinship

582
835 Marriage between members of the same kin group (isangano, bosangema, from the verb -sangema, "to be related") is forbidden. But how far does such a kin group extend? It is impossible to give a general rule. On the one hand, it is certain that if two groups are not descended from a common ancestor there is no bond of kinship between them, even if they live side by side. But on the other hand, it is not possible to say that all those who are descended from the same ancestor are relatives and that marriage is forbidden between the various branches of the grouping they comprise. The question therefore amounts to knowing by which ancestor the exogamous grouping is defined. A decision on this point may only be made through the examination of each case individually.

614 It is impossible to deduce anything from the meaning of the term clan, for it is usually defined as "a grouping of families united to one another by kinship." This leaves us back where we started. The characteristics usually given for a clan are: generic name,

614 621 The Bongangá are divided as follows:

1) Bongangá, in the narrow sense of the term (Basêká Inanô, B. Bolaká, B. Bongêngê, B. Bandûwá, B. Lokôkômyá)

2) Bongangá of Bakoyô, or Bolíma

3) Bongangá of Mbômbê or Basêká Botûna

Thus Lotôlá, Bakoyô, and Mbômbê each have an Etôo group and a Bongangá group. The Bongangá, in the narrow sense of the term, have in addition a "slave" group named Batsína, a part of which is located with the Bosânjo. A foreign clan is settled with the Etôo of Lotôlá; they are the Bofalamboka, descendant of a man named Ekonda (Imbolo) and his sister who was married to Mbete, a slave from Bompângá (Wângatá) who was freed by his master.

Many villages have foreign groups living with them such as descendants of slaves (ekwâla), or others (Ekonda, Bombwanja, groups related by marriage called likílo, mpâmá or bowêlê, and mbûsolá, (1) etc.). [249]

[609] 1. Mpâmá or bowêlê are any foreigners who were formerly invited by the group patriarch to remain with him in order to carry out certain tasks, especially metal-working. Mbûsolá is the term applied to a child born to a woman out of wedlock (Chapter I, Part 2, Article IV, 3). Such children are also called nkio y'ăôme, "the husband's flying dogs," because they are not his own children but are attached to their mother's husband in the fashion of these animals, who attach themselves to trees when they sleep.

[848] [825]

614 582 If we add the descendants of relatives who have married into other more or less remote groupings, the prohibition against marriage on account of kinship applies to a good many people. In accordance with the law of exogamy, such a kin group may be widely dispersed geographically, and it is understandable that it is not always easy to

M 614 untangle all the threads. Thus it happens that young people form
582 relationships with the intention of marrying without knowing that they are related; they are warned only by the opposition and ensuing explanations of the elders.

We may conclude that marriage among descendants of a common ancestor is generally prohibited if they live in the same village. It is frequently permitted on the other hand, if they belong to different villages, provided that they are not, at the same time, related to one of the ancestresses.

M 582 835 Clearly, it is difficult to say what precise degree of kinship formed the basis for the prohibition of or permission for a marriage between descendants of a common ancestor, or what are the boundaries of an exogamous grouping.

M [611] It is also apparent from the preceding observations -- as from the examination of affinity as an obstacle to marriage -- that the descent from a common mother is a more important factor than descent from the father. This does not give proof of a form of matriarchy, though it could be the remains or the beginning of one, or could provide a partial explanation for one. It stems quite simply M [847] from the Nkundó notions concerning procreation, in which they M [602] attribute the major role to the mother. There is also the fact that greater shame is attached to being united with a person descended M [583] from the same woman, and finally the fact that they feel a stronger affection for the mother than for the father (a sentiment [250] which is accentuated by polygamy). The three causes are closely related.

M 184 582 Finally, it should be noted that there is a group among the Nkundó we are discussing which is less strict than the others in this matter. The relatives among whom marriage is prohibited is definitely more limited; that is, their exogamous groupings are more limited. The people in question are the Bongale (see Introduction), and the same phenomenon may be observed among the Elíngá. (1)

P [582] 1. The Batswá are still more liberal, and in this respect their practices differ very little from ancient European laws and customs.

684
582 There is no sanction against the infraction of the law of exogamy. There is only the opposition of the parents and patriarchs, and a quasi-innate habit.

582
614 Note also that members of certain clans frequently marry members of certain others, among whom they prefer to choose their wives. Therefore a good proportion of the women married into any given family will belong to one particular clan. The Wafɛ́ (Bakâala), for instance take a great many of their wives from among the Bongale w'ôtɔlɔ.

[174]
582
614 We may reasonably assume that the ancestors of related groups, who now marry among themselves, formerly practiced exogamy. If this assumption is correct, it must be admitted that with the progressive growth of families, this rule has been relaxed in certain respects so that the present situation has resulted. Consequently, it would not be surprising if these legal provisions became even less rigorous in the future. Actually, some young people have begun to
[178] violate the rules of exogamy and their example has freed the whole family. (2) Thus the Bokâtola maintain that their two groupings,

2. See Chapter I, Article VII, 1.

Bompela and Ilɔ̂ngɛ, who now intermarry, formerly comprised a [251] single exogamous entity. Contemporary instances appear here and there, but they remain very rare, even between persons who are very distantly related, and much rarer between close kin. (1) For the

1. A recent case was that of Elíma and Bolɔ́fe, who both belonged to the exogamous group of Bokenyola of the Bonjoku, but one belonged to the Basɛ́kâ Bokɔ́yɔ́ family and the other to the Basɛ́kâ Njoli.

Nkundɔ still feel very strongly about this law. The bulk of the people are entirely opposed to any laxity or violations and the patriarchs and notables act against them with all their power. But the strength of

582 their intervention is greatly reduced by the fact that much of their
614 authority has been shifted to the chiefs named by the colonial administration, and also by all the contingencies of modern life. Since on the other hand, the young people are gradually breaking the ancient limits in order to acquire greater freedom, the elders will one day have to yield to them.

Article IV. Affinity

582
602 Affinity among the Nkundó should not be understood to have the meaning given in European civil or ecclesiastic law. Marriage is forbidden with all persons who are bakilǒ (Sing. bokilǒ). (2)

2. Contrary to the statement by Father Kaptein (Congo, 1922, Vol. 1, p. 541).

Therefore one must know what persons are called bakilǒ, a fairly complicated problem for us Europeans.

To make the matter more understandable, certain considerations must be developed before giving the general rules.

1. General considerations

1) Affinity is not as great an obstacle to marriage as kinship. It is possible to obtain a sort of "dispensation," and for many degrees of affinity, divorce or death removes the barrier. But there are transgressions [252], and, except for the few indicated above, these do not occur in cases of kinship.

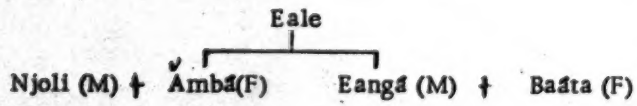
The following legitimate reasons for a "dispensation" are given: a danger that the patrimony will be scattered because of the infidelity of a wife who absolutely refuses to remain with her husband, added to the difficulties of a divorce palaver and the subsequent reimbursements, and -- a reason closely linked to the one just given -- a passionate love between the two people who are relatives by marriage.

582 602 The dispensation is given by the ndonga acting with the family council, which often yields before the fact, particularly if the second reason is involved. (1)

> 1. "To give a dispensation" is translated as kilola. A marriage contracted with a legitimate dispensation or one accorded because of the pressure of the accomplished fact is called kilɔkilɔlá, or "an affinity which is not maintained according to the regulations."

[671] 2. Contrary to European law, which recognizes only a direct affinity between husband and his wife's family, Nkundɔ́ law also recognizes an indirect affinity, so that a person is affinally related even to the spouses of his wife's relatives. That is, each person is affinally related, not only to his spouse's kin, but also to their relatives by marriage. Thus, in the example below, Njoli and Baáta are true relatives by marriage, though indirect ones. (2)

> 2. The Nkundɔ́ do not make a terminological distinction between the two types of affinity. We are using the terms "direct" and "indirect" for the sake of convenience and clarity.



There is an important difference between the two types of affinity: direct affinity is a much greater obstacle to marriage than indirect affinity, and exceptions are made only rarely and only for certain degrees of relationship.

582 602 576 3) A distinction must be made between "superior" and "inferior" relatives, that is, between those who have [253] precedence

582 602 [576] and those who owe submission and respect. The "superior" relatives are the ascendants, uncles, aunts, etc., in short, all those bearing the title of "father" or "mother," as well as elder brothers (elder sisters, elder cousins, etc.), who are batómólɔ́ (sing. botómólɔ́). [601] The "inferiors" are the descendants, those who are called "children" (bǎna): sons and daughters, grandsons, nephews, nieces, younger brothers or sisters, and those who are classed with them and called bakúnɛ́ (sing. bokúnɛ́).

[595] [587] 4) Polygamy and the inheritance of widows introduce another element. We will see that although persons of certain degrees of affinity may not marry, the prohibition is lifted to permit the inheritance of widows.

5) Our term "relatives by marriage" the Nkundɔ́ term and bakilɔ́ are not synonymous, even with respect to direct affinity. When we use the term "relatives by marriage" here, we are speaking in Nkundɔ́ terms. They do not consider certain persons whom we would include in that category as "relations by marriage." Such persons [601] are included in the group which as a whole is designated as likilɔ́ or bakilɔ́, but when properly and accurately referred to they are called bǒme, "husband," or wǎli, "wife," because they may marry each other and therefore affinity, strictly speaking, cannot be applied to them. In other words, for the Nkundɔ́, affinity is the relationship of a person with (only) those of his spouse's relatives whom he is forbidden to marry. It is well to bear in mind the double meaning of this term.

2. The rules

1. Direct Affinity

582 603 606 A. Marriages are prohibited in the direct line. Nevertheless, in accordance with consideration number 4, a son or grandson may inherit or marry the widows of his father or grandfather, but not the reverse. [254]

582
606
603

Example 1

Bakando (F)
|
Mbóyó (M) + Esalé (F)

Mbóyó may never marry Bakando.

Example 2

Eale (M) + Boónsá (F)
|
Mbélá (F)

Eale may never marry Mbélá.

Example 3

Bombembí (M)
|
Iké́té (M) + Basáso (F)

Bombembí may never marry Basásé. (1)

[691]
[586]

1. If after the death of his son Iké́té, Bombembí wanted to marry his widow, the mother of the deceased would be so angry and ashamed that she would irrevocably leave him. Such conduct on the part of a father during his son's lifetime would give the son full rights to vengeance (assassination, war with the help of the mother's clan, etc.), for it would be equivalent to a real disavowal of his son. But the case is purely hypothetical.

Example 4

Esalo (M) - Longá (F)
|
Lofété (M)

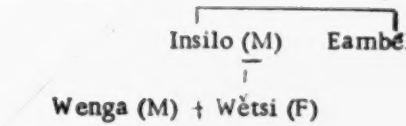
Lofété may marry Longá.

N. B. The same rules apply to grandparents and grandsons.

582 604 B. Members of different generations in the collateral line: Marriage with older, "superior" relatives of the spouse is forbidden. The Injɔlɔ sometimes make an exception for an aunt of the spouse after the latter's death, but this practice is very much frowned upon.

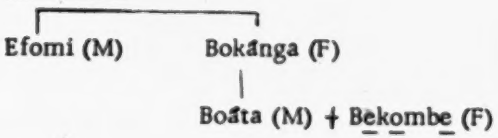
Marriage with the spouse's inferior, younger relatives is permitted.

Example 5



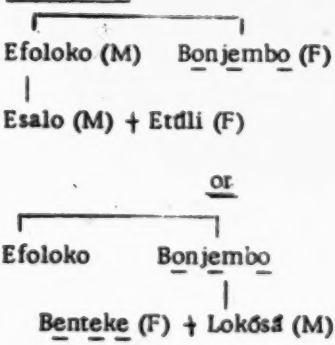
Wenga may not marry Eambela (with the exception noted).

Example 6



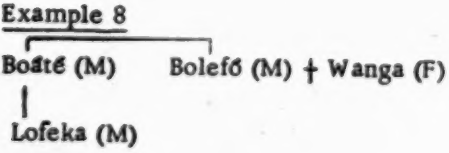
This case is identical with the preceding one.

Example 7



Marriage is forbidden in any event [255]

Example 8



Lofeka may marry Wanga.

582 604 Example 8 (continued)

or

Boɔtɛ́ (M) + Wanga — Bolefó | Lofeka

Example 9

Bosenge (F) — Bonyeme (M) ∔ Edimé (F) | Bosésí may marry Edimé.

Bosésí (M)

The same rules apply equally to great-uncles and great-aunts, and to cousins who are not equals (related as "father" and "son"; see the table of kinship relations and terminology in the appendix).

582 607 C. Equals in the collateral line: The degree of relationship is of no importance, for example, marriage with an older sister (or cousin) of the spouse is forbidden; marriage with a younger sister is permitted. The same rule applies to women, but after the husband's death an exception is sometimes made in the elder brother's favor in order to facilitate inheritance arrangements. Only the Boángí -- like [184] the Elánga of Losanganya -- make no distinction between elder and younger siblings and always permit the marriage. They are even beginning to be imitated by the Injólo.

Example 10

Bongoso (M) ∔ Mbela (F) — Bolófo (F) | Bongoso may marry Bolófo.

Example 11

Mpoku (F) — Boongi (F) ∔ Njamba (M) | Njamba may not marry Mpoku.

582 607

Example 12

Bakɗikɗ (F) ∔ Wanja (M) Wai (M)

Wai may always marry Bakɗikɗ [256].

Example 13

Lɔmpolɛ́ (M) Mbangɔ́ (M) ∔ Njoli (F)

Lɔmpolɛ may not marry Njoli. Very rarely an exception is permitted.

582 605

Example 14

Mpɔ́nga (M) Mpinga (F) Bongonda (M)

Longanja (M) ∔ Bolanga (F) Bɔɗkwɛ́ (F) Imɔnɔ́ (F) Ngolɔ́ (F)

Longanja may not marry his elder cousins, but he may marry the younger ones with the exception of Bɔɗkwɛ́ who is bɔ́nankɛ́nɛ́ and has a "father's" rank (see above).

Similarly:

Example 15

Mpangɛ́ (M) Efɔ́le (F) Ilɛ́nga (M)

Isɔ́ka (F) ∔ Botɔ́lɔ́ (M) Bonina (M) Esɔ́lɛ́ (M) Isongɛ́ (M)

Only Botɔ́lɔ́'s younger cousins may marry Isɔ́ka. Bonina is bɔ́nankɛ́nɛ́, therefore "father," and consequently included among the uncles (see B, above).

[602] Note, finally, that the more distant the relationship, the less strict the prohibition, that is, dispensations and exceptions are more easily accepted.

2. Indirect Affinity

582 606 604

A. Marriage among those of lineal relationship is forbidden but certain exceptions are permitted. There are two possibilities: with the father's wife (Example 16) and with the son's wife (Example 17).

Example 16

Mbembe (M) ∤ Ekila (F)
|
Itfina (M) ∤ Bokôsa (F)

If Bokôsa dies or is divorced from Itfina, the latter may marry Ekila, but this exception is not often made because they would be very open to unkind criticism. [257]

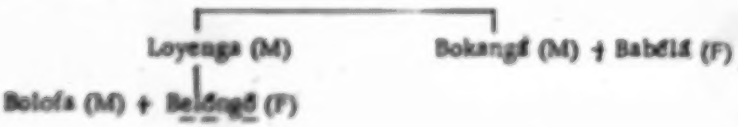
Example 17

Etsîé (M) ∤ Bokolî (F)
|
Njoku (M) ∤ Imfongé (F)

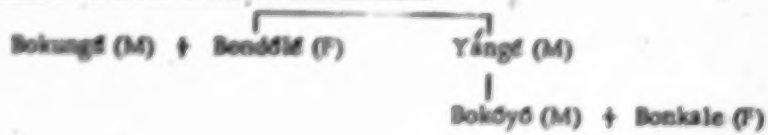
After Bokolî's death Etsîé is permitted to marry Imfongé. Such a marriage is more leniently regarded if Etsîé himself paid the bride price for Imfongé, for in that case he is preserving his capital in marrying her. This consideration may also apply during Bokolî's lifetime, if Imfongé does not want to remain with Njoku. Under such circumstances, however, Njoku's mother would oppose the marriage with all her power. If Etsîé does not listen to reason, he can expect [526] a divorce or even war with Bokolî's clan, to whom he is doing a great injury by taking away his stepson's wife. After divorce Bokolî's kin may refuse to give Etsîé her new bride price and may give it directly to Njoku so that he can obtain a wife to replace the one that was taken from him.

582 604 The same rules are applicable to aunts and uncles, but they are less strict:

Example 18 (comparable to Example 16):



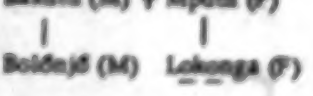
Example 19 (comparable to Example 17):



582 595 605 602 B. Marriage between affines who are collaterally related through their lineal relatives:

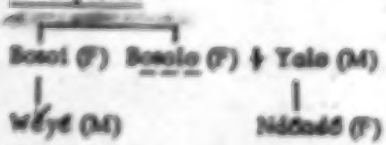
a) Marriage between descendants [of the lineal relatives through whom the affinity is established] is strictly forbidden. Thus, the children of two spouses may not marry each other; they are considered brothers and [258] sisters. The same rule applies to two half-cousins (Example 21).

Example 20:



Marriage between Bolɔ́njɔ́ and Lokonga is strictly prohibited.

Example 21



Marriage between Wɛ́yɛ and Nɔ́ɔndɔ́ is prohibited.

592 602 b) Marriage between ascendants [of the lineal relatives through whom affinity is established] is forbidden, but an exception is made when the affinity is broken by death.

Example 22:

Bombólí (M) — Nkanga (F)
Mómó (F) + Bóóso (M)

Marriage between Bombólí and Nkanga is forbidden.

Example 23

Efoloko (F) Itokó (F) Kóngó (M)
Efole (M) . . . + . . . Bokoko (F)

Marriage between Itokó and Kóngó is forbidden, but permitted upon the death of either Efole or Bokoko.

Dispensations and violations of this rule do occur.

C. Affinity in collateral line arising from a marriage between relatives in collateral line: The rules are the same as for direct affinity in collateral line (see above, no. 1), C.)

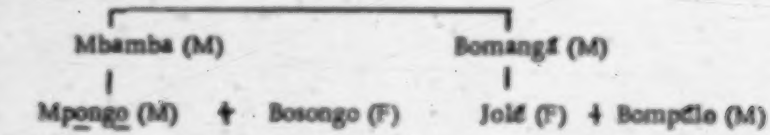
Example 24

[607] Bokaí (M) Lokínga (M) Nóókó (M) — Bokelí (F) Mbóla (F) Bonjéngo (F)

Bokaí is married to Bonjéngo. Neither he nor Lokínga may marry Bokelí, and Nóókó may not marry Mbóla [Translator's note: the table shows Nóókó to be female, but I have corrected the error]. If he had married Bokelí, Nóókó could marry Mbóla. Furthermore, if Bonjéngo were Mbóla's senior, then Lokínga could also marry Mbóla. [259]

The same rule applies to cousins:

Example 25

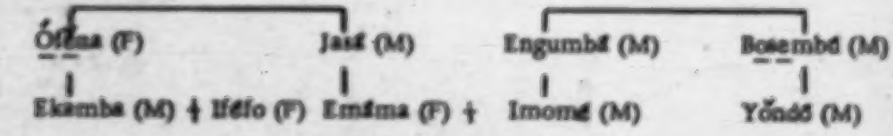


Marriage between Bompɛlo and Bosongo is forbidden.

As the degrees of relationship grow more distant, the obstacles increasingly lose their force, so that exceptions are more readily accepted.

One point remains to be noted, although it has already been mentioned several times. Cousins (male or female) who are bɔ̃nankɛnɛ are "fathers" to their cousins according to Nkundó law; they are therefore treated as aunts or uncles. For them the prohibition is very severe, especially if they are nyangɔ̃kilɔ́, "mother" of a relative by marriage.

Example 26



Ekamba is Jasɛ's bɔ̃nankɛnɛ and therefore Emɛma's "father." Iféfo, his wife, is therefore Emɛma's mother. Emɛma is Yɔ̃ndɔ́'s bokilɔ́. Consequently, Iféfo is the mother of Yondó's bokilɔ́ and therefore Yondó's nyangɔ̃kilɔ́. Marriage between Iféfo and Yɔ̃ndɔ́ is strictly prohibited, though it is not prohibited between Emɛma and Yɔ̃ndɔ́ (see Example 15).

Adulterous relations among these various persons will be discussed in Chapter VI, Article VI, 2. [260]

602 sufficient dowry at home, then I can always go and appeal to my
613 maternal uncles who are obliged to help me insofar as they are able. I even have the right to the free dowry of one of the children of my mother's nkita. I may always lay out gardens and hunt in the territory of my bonyango, and take part in the court sessions of the maternal clan when they consider the allotment of the free dowries or the division of the inheritance. If, however, I wish to leave my father's clan and establish myself for good in the maternal clan, then I receive priority in everything over my male and female cousins and become heir and clan leader directly after my maternal uncles. This is, thus, a truly princely compensation for the so-called inferiority of the woman in native society: the child of the sister (bonankana) restores her gloriously to the honor and rank which are due her.

8. Related Clan: Likilo

607 Outside my paternal clan and outside my maternal clan, I still
608 have blood relations: namely, the children of my paternal aunt and of my sisters or female cousins, each of whom belongs to the clan of his own father. Just as the children of my mother's brothers are my children, so the children of my father's sister are also my fathers. I am, thus, in the same relationship to the children of my mother's brother as the children of my father's sister are to me.

As far as the children of my sister are concerned, they are also my real banankana and, therefore, the fathers of my own children.

The other members of the related clans (who are thus not blood relations) all share, according to generation, in the classification of immediate relatives: all the "fathers" of the husband are "fathers-in-law"; all the mothers, "mothers-in-law"; etc. There is this single big difference, that the "superiors" of the husband are also your "superiors." According to the opinions of the Nkundo, they are the only real relatives. Those on the husband's side are called bokilo; those on the wife's side, bokanga.

/159/ The "subordinates" of the husband are not real relatives
582 and rightly call each other "husband" and "wife." In various legally defined circumstances, marriage relations and marriages are permitted between the latter.

It is unnecessary to repeat that all of the members of the reciprocal clans share in these relationships: the whole generation of a clan

602 member is, as it were, identified with that member, so that, for in-
601 stance, all younger sisters and female cousins of one spouse become "wives" of all the younger brothers and male cousins of the other spouse. One must really have the legal sense and the patience and the capacity for palaver and unravelling of an old Nkundo to make sense out all of these relationships. They themselves compare them, in fact, with the inextricable clew of the intestines of a sort of dwarf crocodile: besofo bya lokekele.

9. Exogamy

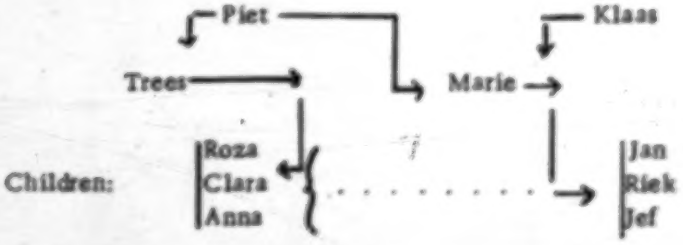
613 582 The term, "exogamic clan," often heard or encountered in writings, is also, at least in the Nkundo-Mongo society, very misleading. The group of persons with whom marriage is forbidden does not constitute any common entity; it differs from person to person. Two half brothers can have the same paternal clan but differ in maternal clan; they can have the same maternal clan and different paternal clans. Marriages are forbidden for older brothers and sisters that are permitted for the younger ones. The rules differ from one blood relation to another, from blood relation with relative-by-marriage to blood relation with relative-by-marriage, from relative-by-marriage with relative-by-marriage to relative-by-marriage with relative-by-marriage.

If one still wishes to put the law of exogamy into European terms, then one might say: 1) blood relationship forbids marriage insofar as the blood relationship is recognized. This recognition varies from clan group to clan group. Sometimes in the same legal but extended clan, an exception is made to this recognition; mostly, however, the different autonomous clans which descend from the same distant ancestor are still bound by the law of exogamy. Generally, groups which have the same father but a different mother /160/ separate most quickly. 2) Relationship (other than blood) forbids marriage—insofar as the relationship is recognized between the parents of spouses; it sometimes permits marriage between children of spouses.

613 582 184 Here it should be observed once again, however, that the customs differ from region to region as regards this recognition; that, for instance, the stepson in many regions may marry his stepmother in a regular marriage; and that the violations are less severely judged and punished in proportion to the degree to which the forbidden relationships diverge.

Rights of the Male Children in Relation to the Nkita of Their Mother

596 583 605 We have already seen that the right of succession and father-hood passed to the male children of the sister, because she had been sold and had brought money into the family, or rather because she had a nkita there, a sort of guarantee for the money that had been received for her. Nkita-ship brought another right to them, namely, the female children born of the mother's nkita belonged to them; they could sell them and get themselves other women with the money. They could [582] not, however, marry them, since they were their cousins, and custom was opposed to any marriage between relatives. The boys could, [603] nevertheless, take the nkita of their mother as a wife, since the Negroes have no notion of affinity or relationship by marriage. The male children were, then, the owners of the female children that the nkita of their mother brought into the world:



These three girls, children of nkita Trees, belong to the three sons of Marie. If Marie had only one son, then Piet would have the right to trade the two other girls for money and to buy other wives with this money, either for himself or for his younger brother; but if she [Marie?] brought female children into the world, half of them belong to Marie's son.

583 604 If the nkita gave birth to no children of the female sex, the boys of Marie could resort to the husband of the nkita of their mother, namely, their uncle, nyangobika. If, however, he had no fortune, no money, [337] no wives, no girls to sell ... or only wives to whom others could lay claim and had more right, then they were disinherited, poor devils in society, and it cost them long years of work and much

000 What is one to do if even in such cases it is taught, "One must respect" the native customs?

587 428 [184] The inheriting of wives existed everywhere; it was, in fact, the only wealth left behind by the native. The details of the distribution differed according to district or tribe. Thus, for instance, in some districts it was the eldest son who alone inherited all of the wives of his father. This was in order to preserve the rank and the class of the family. Prestige and power actually depended only on the number of wives that one possessed. In this case, however, this eldest son had, in place of his father, to provide a wife for his younger brothers and the sons of his sisters. As far as impediments [582] to marriage were concerned, generally they strictly observed the impediment of blood relationship; two blood relatives, even in a distant degree, should never enter into marriage, [541] with the exception of the irregularities mentioned above. As for relatives by marriage, these do not exist for them in any degree. There is, nevertheless, one case that somewhat resembles relationship by marriage, namely, the Nkita might never be in the home of a man together with the woman whose Nkita she was. Thus, the son-in-law or the brother-in-law might never take the Nkita of his wife into his home. If, however, the wife had left or died, there was no further impediment.

587 428 431 When, like the inheritance above, the family had returned the bride price and had then married the woman to another man, this second husband also had to give a gift to the one who, according to the law of inheritance, had the right to the wife. This gift was called a bampanga.

587 428 If the wife who was freed by the family had children, only a part of the bride price had to be returned. Sometimes the wife was freed completely through her children. The children then remained with the family of the deceased husband, and they then represented the value of the bride price of their mother. If, however, such a woman was married again by her family, they demanded a second bride price for that.

587 428 583 Sometimes a single woman was the Nkita of several other women. In the inheritance several people then had a right over her, and everyone demanded his share. For instance, a young man

614 to each other than either of these groups with Nsambásílí (see Diagram 2). It was for this reason that in my dissertation I divided this rank into two different ranks (kinship subgroups I° and II°). (15) Since there are no obvious criteria for the two

15. Müller, Fürstentum, p. 125.

ranks and since such a division is not possible in the other villages, I no longer make such distinctions.

[582] [835] The groups of rank C are the exogamous units of the future. Although marriage is not permitted between the members of different C-groups, sexual relations between them are permitted. This permission corresponds to the lonkana of the Bokótɛ́ (16).

16. Hulstaert, "Mariage," p. 97.f.

Groups of Rank D

614 582 The groups of this category constitute the truly exogamous units. It is true that marriages between "advanced persons" ["evolués"] take place even within rank D, but this practice is still frowned upon by the old people. In Isangi we also find the special stipulation that members of two D-groups, Ngelɛ́ and Nkoto, may intermarry, [195] but they may not enter into marriage with members of the D-group, Bolíma. Since in present-day Isangi, Bolíma is extinct, this stipulation only works to the disadvantage of the emigrants in Bolíma w'ísi and of the children of sisters in other villages. The Bolíma group is regarded as the father group of Isangi (see Diagram 1); Ngelɛ́ is the group of the older brother, Nkoto that of the younger brother. This serves as an explanation for the special position of Bolíma in the exogamous system. It is said that it would not be right for a "father" to marry one of his "children" even if these children are the offspring of such distant generations that they intermarry.

614 582 The exogamy rules of the Ekonda do not only refer to their own, agnatic group, but also to all cognate groups to whom kinship relations can still be traced back, i.e., a span of about five generations.

Groups of Rank E

614 621 It may be assumed that these groups always extend beyond the confines of a village. Those parts of a group who have settled next to each other have their communal meeting place, but even the dispersed fractions of the group may come there to consult. In former times probably only one such group had a nkúmú, a sacred prince who lived in the main village (e.g., Isangi), while the other villages were ruled by the senior. Once the title of nkúmú was also bestowed on persons from other villages, the importance of the E-groups almost completely disappeared. Also, in this category the local group plays a much greater role. Occasionally it even includes dependent [609] villages which have not yet been "paternalized," i.e., which are still regarded as alien. In this connection it should be mentioned that probably all larger local groups tend to reconstitute themselves into kinship groups by reinterpreting the genealogy to suit their purposes. It is certain that the "kinship relation" of many "kinship groups" has been created in this manner. We may dismiss the possibility that groups which are divided from one another by the rule of exogamy will invent a kinship relation so close that a previously possible marriage would be outlawed. Also, the combination of other important functions of the lower ranks resulting from the invention of a closer relationship would run counter to the tendency of progressive differentiation (17).

17. We know through statements of the natives that about one hundred years ago the exogamy limit was lowered to the present level. Before that time only the Lonkâna was permitted among the Ngele, Nkoto, and Bolíma.

601 banankana). As a result, the children are legally identified
602 with their mothers. Thus, my sister's child is a child (bona) to me, or a sister's child (bonankana), but to my own child he would be father (ise).

In addition, he has maternal blood relatives, children of my mother's sisters, who are thus his "brothers and sisters," or children of the daughters of his "male mothers." Since these last daughters are his "children," their children would be his "grandchildren." Again, all the members of these clans who are unrelated by blood are his bokanga.

IV. Likilo

601 There are affinal clans which have given wives (wali; pl.,
602 baali) to my clan. This does not, of course, concern my mother's
582 clan, which is a clan related by blood, but rather clans which have given wives, be it to a classificatory "father," to one of their sons, or to one of the sons of the latter. The Nkundo calls all the members of these clans -- with the exception of the woman -- bokilo (pl., bakilo). The Nkundo, merely by marrying a woman, at the same time marries all her legal younger sisters, that is to say, all the bakune [Ed., bankana?] and bana of this woman. Similarly, the woman marries not only a man, but at the same time all his legal younger brothers, that is, all the bakune and bana of this man (except the children of their own union).

601 Just as the clans which have received a wife from my clan thus
602 include bokanga and sisters' sons, so also clans that have given us a wife include bakilo and "wives." Clans which have given a wife to my bonyango follow the same rules.

Comments

121 In several recent studies, especially in South Africa, four
614 rules have been defined which govern classificatory terminology.
602 The first rule is that of the "unity of the lineage": The lineage as a whole is classified as belonging to a particular 'generation'